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CRUSADE OF THE CLERGY AGAINST THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY.

HISTORY OF THE CRUSADE.

The Syracuse Convention.

Preludes of the Press.

REPORTS OF THE CONVENTION.

Comments of the Press,
&c., &c., &c.

EDITORIAL PROLOGUE.

The deep interest with which the whole country, and especially all Socialists, have watched the crusade of the clergy against the Oneida Community, seems to justify us in devoting this number of our paper to a full report of the SYRACUSE CONVENTION in which that movement has just culminated. The issues involved are of universal interest, and we are confident our subscribers will not think it an egotistical or sectarian perversion of our editorial stewardship, if we for once give them a meal of our own private pot-luck.

Our intention is to make a paper that will satisfy a wide-spread special demand outside of our subscription-circle. On this account we beg our ordinary readers to excuse some repetitions and engage with us to distribute the information massed in this issue, as far as possible. We shall print a large edition and sell it at the lowest paying price, hoping that it will be taken up by our friends—or enemies, if they please—for extra circulation.

History of the Crusade.

The movement against the Oneida Community which culminated in the Syracuse Conference is not of recent origin. It dates back a dozen years or more, and had at least two commanders before Dr. J. W. Mears, Professor in Hamilton College, came to the front in its management.

THE FIRST COMMANDER.

Those who would learn of its beginnings should look over the old files of papers published in the vicinity of Schenectady and note an occasional article bearing the signature of E. P. Freeman—a resident of that city—who from some cause was much disturbed by the principles of the Oneida Community, and took advantage of every opportunity to attack that Society, and especially its founder, in the newspapers. He was not, however, a man of much power or influence, and his diatribes received no particular attention on the part of the Communists. They had, in fact, a feeling of commiseration rather than of anger toward him, and after his son (having arrived at legal maturity) joined the

Community, they helped support the old gentleman for several years and until his death—voluntarily incurring in this way an expenditure of more than a thousand dollars; he, meanwhile, doing all in his power to incite the public and especially the churches against the Community. But let him rest in peace! He may have thought he was serving the Lord, even when he cursed the hand that fed him.

THE SECOND COMMANDER.

Mr. Freeman's mantle fell upon Dr. Tayler Lewis, of Schenectady—a Professor in Union College. He worked well against the Community even while Mr. Freeman lived; and being a man of learning and ability, his articles bearing upon the Community were readily published by such papers as the *New York Independent*, and must have attracted the attention of the clergy generally. He, too, has passed to his account, and we will say nothing to injure his honored name.

THE THIRD COMMANDER.

The present leader of the movement against the Community, Dr. J. W. Mears, has shown more versatility and persistence than either of his predecessors. Nor has he been content with writing newspaper articles and preaching dry sermons about the Community. As early as Oct. 23, 1873, we find his name on a committee of seven appointed by the Presbyterian Synod of Central New York, "to confer with other religious bodies, and to consider the expediency and feasibility of any further measures on this matter [of the Oneida Community], and to report at the next meeting of the Synod." It has been stated that one of the seven subsequently said he was ashamed to have his name appear on the committee. We have reason to suppose Dr. Mears was mainly responsible for the action taken by the Synod of 1873. It excited considerable comment at the time, which, so far as we had occasion to observe, was generally favorable to the Community, and adverse to intermeddling with the affairs of a Society of which no one has just cause of complaint. One of the leading papers of the city in which the Synod held its session said, in its comments upon the language adopted by the Synod: "The Community is a positive blessing to the locality where it is placed. No finer example of quiet industry and inflexible honesty can be found;" and forcibly asked—"Are honesty, integrity, sobriety and honor such common and worthless plants that we must trample them under foot?" And Dr. Mears himself lamented most pathetically, in an article which he published: "We look in vain for any earnest, outspoken words of condemnation on the part of the daily press generally, which prides itself on being the specific guardian of the interests of the public."

LATER ECCLESIASTICAL PROCEEDINGS.

Next we find that the Baptist State Convention, which held its sessions at Hornellsville, in October, 1874, "appointed a committee to coöperate with the committee of the Synod of Central New York in regard to suppressing the Oneida Community." Next we find, in the *Utica Herald* of November, 1874, a report adopted by the Synod of Central New York at its session in Oswego (which was possibly prepared by the committee of the previous year, though unsigned by them), recommending as "a line of action," 1, the prevention of the transmission of Community literature through the mails; 2, the discouragement of all social relations with the Community; 3, the procurement of additional legislation. But the paper or report excited little interest and no indignation against the Community; and, indeed, the document carried an antidote to all its poison, for it gave ample credit to the institution it sought to condemn, for its good work and its benefit to the region surrounding the Community—acknowledged that it had "raised up a large and influential circle of friends, who are prepared to do battle for it;" that "respectable and religious people are found who deprecate any interference with the concern;" and that the previous action of the Synod, "in expressing an opinion and appointing a committee of inquiry on the subject, drew forth a number of newspaper articles, which, with a single

known exception, were more complimentary to the Community than to the Synod itself!"

Since 1874, we have occasionally heard of discussions and resolutions by religious bodies with reference to the Oneida Community, but have not felt sufficient interest in the proceedings to keep a very close watch of them. We presume Dr. Mears has brought the subject in one form or another before the Synod of Central New York at least once a year since he took charge of the general movement in 1873. Of his more recent operations in this line the following account, taken from the *Syracuse Standard* of Feb. 14, is the most definite in its statements of anything we have seen:

"Something like a year ago the Utica Presbytery appointed a committee, of which Prof. Mears, of Hamilton College, was chairman, to obtain information in reference to the practices of members of the Community, and to report to the Presbytery at its next meeting. In October last the General Association of the Congregational Church of New York and the Synod of the Presbyterian Church were held simultaneously in Oswego. Dr. Beard of this city suggested to Prof. Mears at that time, that if resolutions condemnatory of the institution, and urging action to suppress it were passed by the Synod, similar action would be taken by the Association. This was done by the Synod, and the Association adopted resolutions to the effect that they regarded the Oneida Community as a 'pernicious institution, which rests substantially on a system of organized fanaticism and lust,' and recommending Congregationalists to coöperate with the Presbyterians for its suppression, and in endeavoring to procure such legislation as would result in its disorganization."

This brings us to the "call" for the Syracuse Conference, which was issued nearly a month ago and addressed to ministers generally in the State of New York. And here it is proper to correct a mistake which the *New York Tribune*, and perhaps other papers, have fallen into in regard to the author of the Call and the first movers of the Convention. The *Tribune* of Feb. 17 begins its report of the Convention thus:

"Some time since the Rt. Rev. Bishop Huntington, of the diocese of Central New York, and Chancellor Haven, of the Syracuse University, determined to begin a movement to eradicate the Oneida Community."

Then follows a statement of the doings of the Convention, its resolutions, etc., without once mentioning the name of PROF. MEARS. The inevitable implication is that Bishop Huntington and Chancellor Haven were the prime movers and chief men of the Convention, the authors of the call, resolutions, etc., and general managers of the whole proceedings. Whereas, all accounts that we have seen place Prof. Mears in this front position. His name is first on the Call. He is reported to have begun with consulting and moving Bishop Huntington. He was by all odds the most active man in the Convention, and his previous career made him the natural fuleman of the Crusade. The *Tribune's* representation is a manifest injustice to the gentlemen which it thrusts into the leadership, as well as to Prof. Mears, the actual leader.

THE CALL, AND HOW IT WAS MADE PUBLIC.

"SYRACUSE, N. Y., Jan. 23, 1879.

"DEAR SIR: The great wrong done to society by the institution known as the 'Oneida Community,' from its deadly opposition to the principles of Christian morality, appears to demand some united counsel and action on the part of teachers of the gospel and defendants of public and domestic virtue in this part of the country.

"After some informal consultation we, the undersigned, are encouraged to write you to attend a preliminary meeting at Syracuse, in the University building, on Friday the 14th day of February, at 2:30 o'clock P. M.

"Will you kindly inform the Rev. A. F. Beard, D. D., Syracuse, whether you may be expected to be present?"

"JOHN W. MEARS,
"A. HUNTINGTON,
"A. F. BEARD,
"E. O. HAVEN,
"E. G. THURBER."

It was the purpose of Dr. Mears and others to keep the meeting and its proceedings, and of course the call itself, away from the public; but some enterprising members of the press of Syracuse, learning that the meeting was to be held, and that a circular of invitation had been sent out, visited the house of Chancellor Haven of the Syracuse University at a late hour, a few nights previous to the assembling of the delegates, and, though the worthy Chancellor had disrobed and retired, they were graciously granted, not only an interview, but a

copy of the Call. It was of course a great blunder, in the first place, to try to keep such a meeting secret; but a still greater blunder, after the Call had been published to exclude the representatives of the press from the meeting, and resulted in a ridiculous failure to keep any part of the proceedings from the general public, as will duly appear.

The Syracuse Convention.

PRELUDES OF THE PRESS.

FROM THE UTICA DAILY OBSERVER.

EDITORIAL PRELUDE OF FEB. 13TH.

The *Observer's* news columns have already announced that on Friday of this week a meeting of clergymen will be held at Syracuse, with a view to taking some action against the Oneida Community. A word of suggestion to the reverend promoters of this proposed gathering may not be misplaced. Zeal without knowledge is sometimes dangerous. If the Community at Oneida, or any other Community, has violated the laws of the State of New York it is certainly the privilege, and perhaps the duty, of the clergy to take upon themselves the functions of public prosecutors. But if a searching examination of the statutes should convince them that no written law had been violated, it might not be desirable to push to trial those whom the juries would acquit and the courts discharge.

It may and probably will be asserted, however, that the Oneida Community has offended against the unwritten law—against the sense of decency prevailing in the public mind. But before this charge is fulminated it would be well for the clergy to study the facts. It is a generation ago that the Oneida Community was established. Its founder, JOHN HUMPHREY NOYES, was a graduate of Dartmouth College and a clergyman of the Congregationalist Church. There is nothing in his long life to indicate that he is either a hypocrite or knave. He professes to believe in "perfectionism," in a surrender to religion so complete and perfect that those who make it will be removed from the dominion of sin. He professes to believe that those who have reached this condition may live in harmony, sharing all things and assuming the relations of a complex family. If he is sincere in this belief, he and those who act with him have a perfect right to entertain it, provided they invade no rights that belong to others and violate no statute of the State.

It is well to bear in mind that the Oneida Community seeks no proselytes, and accepts no additions to its family. It makes no warfare on the social or religious structure of the world. Its members are industrious and thrifty. They not only care for their own, but they give employment to many other working people. Their stamp upon any article of merchandise is a guarantee that it is good—that it is in all respects as it is represented. The Community numbers perhaps 275 souls at the present time. It is in accord with itself, and it may be well for the Syracuse gathering to know that the people of the towns in which it is located are inclined to defend it from assaults. Its members have borne themselves toward outsiders as peaceable, law-abiding citizens, and have gained the respect which fair and honorable dealing compels. The fact that the *Observer* disagrees with the peculiar doctrines of the Community at every point does not blind it to the necessity of dealing justly with it. We sincerely hope that the clergy at Syracuse will be sure of their ground before they begin a crusade.

FROM THE UTICA HERALD.

EDITORIAL PRELUDE OF FEB. 14TH.

The meeting to be held to-day at Syracuse to "consider whether it would not be well for the Christian churches to make some decided expression concerning the Oneida Community," has for sponsors leading clergymen of several denominations in Oneida and Onondaga counties. The institution to which reference is directed is an anomaly in our State. It does not recognize moral obligations which the body of our people consider vital to the very existence of society. It has lived for years before the eyes of our citizens, and has attained to considerable material prosperity.

Inquiry has more than once been started with a view to the indictment of the members and the extirpation of the organization. The most careful scrutiny has failed to construct a case which would bring either the individuals or the Community within the reach of the courts. They occupy a different position from the Mormons whom the recent decision of the United States supreme court brings to account for polygamy. For

this Community at Oneida does not permit any contract of marriage between its members, so that the relations, whatever they may be, do not violate the statutes on that subject. Of the personal intimacies which may exist or may be suspected, the laws take no cognizance. It is very probable that they might in cities come under certain ordinances established under almost every municipal charter; but the general statutes of the State do not seem to cover them. In Utica or in Syracuse very likely the condition of affairs existing at the Oneida Community might permit a visitation by the police and a closing of the establishment. That opinion is entertained by good lawyers upon the ground of common notoriety concerning the proceedings there. In a rural district like that where the Community is actually situated, the officers and the tribunals seem to possess no jurisdiction over such acts.

Yet the existence of the Community shocks the moral sense of the greater part of the people. In the absence of law the only recourse this majority has is to an expression such as the call for this meeting contemplates. For the leaders in this movement are men who are first of all conservators of law as the safeguard of all morality. They will not go one step beyond the statutes. They will cast their influence against any inclination to appeal to any influence other than to the courts and to the moral majesty of right opinion.

This is one of the grave difficulties of the situation. Discussion of the subject adds notoriety to the institution and advertises its creed. The severest condemnation will fasten attention upon matters, which, if it were possible, might well be left to silence and darkness. The directors of this movement have considered that the magnitude of the evil requires public treatment. They believe that their protest will save some who otherwise might fall under the control of the theories and the practices which they feel to be so pernicious.

Perhaps it is proposed that some legislation can be secured to work a remedy. The difficulties are greater than they seem. Any statute to reach the case must be in general terms; it will not answer to enact that the Oneida Community shall be abolished, or that its practices shall be a misdemeanor. To confer upon town or county officers the authority by which city officials reach houses with which it is claimed the Community may be classed, will be a radical change in all the habits of our legislation. The proceedings of this meeting will have an important bearing upon this question. Its directors have doubtless studied what sort of an act would solve the difficulty, and on what principles it can be maintained and enforced. It may be taken for granted that the managers of the Community, who have proved themselves shrewd beyond the usual standard of those who go outside of conventional laws and institutions, will be quick to adjust their outward practices to any statutes which may be devised against them. For their belief no man will propose to call them before any civil tribunal or apply any other corrective than reason offers.

FROM THE ALBANY EVENING TIMES.

EDITORIAL PRELUDE OF FEB. 12TH.

A telegram published yesterday announced that a movement was on foot to dislodge that nest of unclean birds known as the Oneida Community, and that a meeting was to be held at Syracuse for that purpose on St. Valentine's day. This is an undertaking which has been often talked of before, and it remains to be seen whether the reverend gentlemen who propose now to take the job upon their hands will be able to complete it. The Community has occupied its present location over thirty years, and has grown powerful with the strength which money brings. Aside from the abhorred social ethics by which it is governed, no fault whatever can be found with its members. They are good citizens, so far as paying their taxes are concerned; they employ a large number of outside people, pay them well, are good folks to work for, are scrupulously honest, and mind their own business, not caring nor attempting to make practical proselytes, and yearly refusing admission to hundreds who seek to join them. With these characteristics in their favor, they have been permitted to remain in their present home in Oneida county, undisturbed and prosperous. The only way by which they can be eradicated is through some legal process, which they undoubtedly are prepared to contest; and such is the looseness of the statutes in this State in regard to the sexual relation, that it would not be surprising if a special act of the legislature were found necessary before the obnoxious Community could be broken up.

The Oneida Community is *sui generis*; there is nothing like it anywhere else in the world. Its social system is only to be named with horror and disgust; yet the visitor sees nothing either to alarm or to annoy him in the least. Plain, thoughtful people, well informed and well behaved, are attending to their daily duties, which are light and pleasant, under apparently the most cheerful and agreeable circumstances. All are moderately busy; all are comfortably dressed; the common table is loaded with the most healthful food; the conversation is intelligent; the library is large and well stocked with the latest works in science and litera-

ture; and one sees and hears as little to shock decorum as he would at a Presbyterian prayer-meeting. The surrounding atmosphere is apparently more didactic than licentious; more like a theological seminary than the home of free-lovers. It is a singular fact, that the institution is an offshoot of New England orthodoxy. J. H. Noyes, its founder, who is still living, is of Puritan stock. He was born in Brattleboro, Vt., September 3, 1811; entered Dartmouth at 15, and graduated in 1830. He began to study law, but became the subject of a religious revival in 1831, "the year of revivals," and four weeks after his conversion was admitted to the theological seminary at Andover. After one year there he joined the seminary at Yale, and in August, 1833, he was licensed to preach by the New Haven association. For a short time he labored in North Salem, in this State; and at one time he pledged himself to become a foreign missionary (if only he had gone to the Cannibal islands!) but withdrew on account of imbibing new "views" and becoming a so-called "Perfectionist." Communistic ideas followed, and beginning with his wife and a few members of his father's family, from 1840 to 1847 the new society increased to forty in number, and advanced "from community of faith to community of property, community of households, community of affections." This was in Putney, Vt., but Putney, Vt., soon became too hot to hold them, and "Perfectionists" of the same faith being about to form a Community at Oneida, the Putney exiles joined them, and on the 1st of March, 1848, they were fully organized on the very spot where they are to-day. In an "outline of doctrines," published by themselves, they say:

"The Community has its basis in religious ideas. These ideas, while claiming authority from the Bible, will seem as new and revolutionary as the social structure which they sustain. In fact, Communism as held at Oneida, cannot for a moment be dis severed from its theology. The two must be considered together, and together stand or fall. The two corner-stones of doctrine equally important, on which Communism rests, are, the doctrine of complete regeneration or salvation from sin, and the truth that the Second Coming of Christ and the founding of his heavenly kingdom took place 1800 years ago."

All those texts which the Rev. Dr. Clark and his coadjutors have been quoting so profusely are advanced by the Oneida theologians to prove that the Savior's words have been fulfilled when he said: "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled;" and again: "There be some standing here who shall not taste of death till they shall see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." But this Second Coming, say these theologians, was an event in the spiritual and not in the natural world. They are, therefore, living in the kingdom of heaven, where there is no marriage nor giving in marriage. Now a word as to their peculiar social relations, from one of their own works:

"Free love with us does not mean freedom to love to-day and leave to-morrow; nor freedom to take a woman's person and keep our property to ourselves; nor freedom to freight a woman with our offspring and send her downstream without care or help; nor freedom to beget children and leave them to the street and the poor-house. Our Communities are families as distinctly bounded and separated from promiscuous society as ordinary households. The tie that binds us together is as permanent and sacred, to say the least, as that of marriage, for it is our religion. We receive no members (except by deception or mistake) who do not give heart and hand to the family interest for life and forever. Community of property extends just as far as freedom of love. Every man's care and every dollar of the common property is pledged for the maintenance and protection of the women and the education of the children of the Community."

The result of the Syracuse crusade will be looked for with interest, but we predict that before it is successful the country will ring with a discussion of Communistic principles. Let us hope that in this instance "the blood of the martyrs" will not be "the seed of the church." If persecution is to lead to spreading the faith which allows that "a man may marry his grandmother," it were better the plague-spot be left to die of its own disease.

FROM THE OSWEGO DAILY TIMES.

EDITORIAL PRELUDE OF FEB. 12TH.

It seems certain clerical gentlemen and other reputable citizens in central New York are contemplating some kind of opposition to the Oneida Community, which doubtless they regard as a social abomination. Our dispatches yesterday announced that a meeting has been called by Rev. Dr. Mears of Hamilton College, Chancellor Haven of Syracuse University, Bishop Huntington of the Episcopal Diocese of Central New York, Rev. Mr. Thurber, Dr. Beard and others, to meet in Syracuse University on the 14th inst. to decide what shall be done. Invitations are extended to clergymen in all the principal cities of the State.

The financial success of the Oneida Community has given it a kind of respectability, and their correct and honorable dealing has caused almost all classes of persons to overlook the social relations which do or are supposed to exist there. What these relations are very few people know. We have some curiosity to see how these gentlemen are to proceed against them. The Oneida Community own their own land,—they pay their debts, they are at peace with the world and all mankind,—they use everybody well who come upon their

premises. If they are to be proceeded against, how and for what? Moral processes will not affect them. What law have they violated so that the civil arm will reach them? Do they live in adultery? Who knows it? How can it be proven? What are you going to do about it, if they do? A gilded den of social abomination, as everybody believes it is, how will these eminent divines and scholars go to work to clean it out? We shall watch the solution of the problem with interest.

FROM THE NEW YORK HERALD.

PRELUDE OF FEB. 13TH.

ONEIDA COMMUNITY.

Episcopal and Presbyterian Bishops and Priests in WAR PAINT! A Religious Crusade.

Utica, Feb. 13, 1879.

A ride of four miles from the village of Oneida through a blinding snow-storm to-day brought the *Herald's* correspondent to the large, comfortable and cheerful home of the Oneida Community, which is located upon 580 acres of the best farm and grazing lands in the State, on the Oneida and Madison county lines. Here and hereabout are located real and personal property to the value of \$500,000, which is owned in common by about three hundred persons (males and females being about evenly divided) in this, the headquarters of the Oneida Community, and about twenty-five persons at the Wallingford (Conn.) branch. The property consists of vast trap-shops, silk and canned goods, factories, handsome dwellings and farm buildings, all well stocked; splendidly bred horses and magnificent cattle—in fact, everything that could make a home or Community happy and comfortable.

SPEECH OF PEOPLE.

The Oneida Community stands well with its neighbors, judging by the speech of people, which is to the effect that the members mind their own business, are industrious, temperate, frugal, courteous, honorable in all dealings with their fellows, good citizens, and, as a Community, pay one hundred cents on a dollar, and of inestimable value to the people of the surrounding country by giving employment to from 100 to 350 worthy people at various seasons, and enhancing the value of real estate in both counties for miles around their home. If the reverend gentlemen who have called upon their fellows to unite with them at Syracuse, and agree upon some plan for the extermination of this Community, had depended upon the neighbors of the Communists to take the initiative, the call would never have been issued. The best informed people of the locality assure me that no legal proceedings will ever be commenced in the courts of the county if they depend upon the action of local officers or residents. This for an introduction to my call to-day to obtain the views of the leaders upon the proposed crusade against the Community.

THE COMMUNITY ON THE CRUSADE.

I met J. Humphrey Noyes, the acknowledged leader of the Community; but as he is suffering from an affection of the throat which prevents his indulging in prolonged conversation, directed my interview to William Alfred Hinds, the accomplished Editor of the *AMERICAN SOCIALIST* and author of a recent work on the American Communities.

Mr. Hinds cordially welcomed me as the representative of the *Herald* and cheerfully responded to my request for information regarding the views of the Community upon the proposed efforts of the clergy to destroy that body. The result of the interview and replies to my questions were as follows:

Mr. Hinds.—We first heard of the meeting called by Dr. Mears, of Hamilton College, Bishop Huntington and others, a day or two ago in the newspapers. The announcement created no more excitement in our Community than did any of the former agitations of this character, almost the whole ground having been gone over in the sensation of August of last year, which was based upon the misrepresentations and garbled reports of a New York Bohemian.

Correspondent.—What originated that excitement?

Mr. Hinds.—A report that there were internal dissensions in the Community and the reported secession of ten members of the Community.

Correspondent.—This is not the first time that Dr. Mears has agitated this subject?

Mr. Hinds.—No, sir. He brought the Community to the attention of the Presbyterian Synod of Central New York and other like bodies a several years ago.

Correspondent.—What do you think is the object of the meeting called at Syracuse this week?

Mr. Hinds.—We think this is the preliminary to an effort to make the movement against the Community general; an effort to concentrate the views of representatives of the various churches of the State for the purpose of creating public sentiment, if possible, in favor of State legislation against the Community. In fact, Dr. Mears stated this purpose in substance on August 10, 1878, to the editor of the *Utica Herald*, when he said that he "thought if the Community was ever disturbed it would have to be by the passage of a special statute to fit its case." What the prospect of enacting such a law was he could express no opinion. He had visited the Community and been most kindly treated there. He regarded its members as upright men in business life and

believed that the founders of the Community were sincere in their peculiar doctrines." * * *

Correspondent.—Do you not think that the new Polygamy act of Congress has stimulated Dr. Mears and his confrères to renewed effort?

Mr. Hinds.—It has doubtless given life to this movement, but that act has no reference to Communities like ours, and only affects Territories under the jurisdiction of the United States government. * * *

Correspondent.—If special legislation is secured what will be the course of the Community?

Mr. Hinds.—Special legislation is unpopular nowadays and finds little favor. If we should find ourselves in conflict with the people of any locality we should avoid that conflict, even if it involved our withdrawal from that locality. * * * Our Community is a non-proselyting institution. All we ask, and all we have ever asked, is to allow us to go on our peaceful way. We have been quite careful even in our own paper to keep our radical society principles in the background. For a year at least we have not circulated at all any of our publications explaining these peculiar principles. In fact, we have entirely withdrawn them from circulation, and at present have no intention of thrusting them on the public. * * *

We probably shall go through some such experience as the Shakers have in this country. Everybody respects them now and speaks well of them, but during the first years of their history they were subject to terrible persecutions, maltreated in various ways, their meetings broken up, property destroyed, their societies threatened with violence, etc. They have lived down the opposition to them, and so has the Oneida Community in its immediate neighborhood. It is only necessary for our permanent peace that the whole State shall come to know us as well as our neighbors do, and the present movement may help us in that respect.

Correspondent.—You have read the formal call for the meeting. What have you to say as to its assertions?

Mr. Hinds.—The call of the reverend gentlemen asserts that the Community is doing "a great wrong to society from its deadly opposition to the principles and practices of Christian morality." What is meant by this we do not quite understand. Professor Mears has publicly given us credit for honesty and uprightness in all our dealings. In no instance within our history of thirty years have our practices and principles been thrust upon persons outside to disturb families or create scandal of any kind. This shows at least that we are not disturbers or deadly opponents of Christian morality, as is put forth. As between common marriage and "free love," as it is termed, or any system of sexual morality that has fewer guarantees than marriage, we stand and always have stood with marriage. Although we disclaim any principle of ownership as between man and woman, yet our system, we claim, furnishes incomparably better and safer guarantees for the protection of women and the education of children than monogamy. For every one who may have left our Community on account of disappointment in regard to our peculiar ideas of social life several have left because they did not find the sexual freedom they anticipated. Under our system there is no sexual compulsion; every person is at liberty to live a pure Shaker life if he or she chooses.

Correspondent.—What of the seceders of last summer?

Mr. Hinds.—Three of them have already returned, and still another has applied to return.

Correspondent.—Will the Community be represented at Syracuse?

Mr. Hinds.—Some member will probably go to hear what is said if he can obtain admission.

The *Herald* correspondent then left the hospitable and courteous Community with acknowledgments for the information given.

FROM THE AMERICAN SOCIALIST.

[THE LEADING ARTICLE IN AN EXTRA PRESENTED TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CONVENTION BY AN AGENT OF THE O. C.]

The analogy between the Oneida Community and the Mormons, which is much insisted on in certain quarters, fails in many ways, and especially on two very important points, to which we beg leave to call attention.

1. The Oneida Communists are and always have been peaceable subjects of civil authority. No seditious act has ever been charged upon them. They have never had a thought of carrying out their Communistic principles in opposition to the laws, or even to the public opinion of the people among whom they dwell. Soon after their first settlement at Oneida, on the occasion of an attempted prosecution (which brought to light all the objectionable features of their system and was afterward withdrawn) they explicitly offered to sell out and leave, if that was the wish of their neighbors; and they fully expected to do so, but were stopped by a voluntary petition to the contrary, signed by many respectable people in the vicinity. They were assured at that time and many times afterward, by lawyers of high standing, that they were not breaking any laws. They have substantially repeated the same offer from time to time, as often as there seemed to be danger of collision with public authority or public opinion. It has lately been generally admitted, even by their enemies, that they are not breaking existing laws; and it is understood that new legislation is contemplated. If such legislation should be obtained, the Communists would certainly obey it, though they might justly complain of its *ex post facto* character. They will be faithful to their record of submission to "the powers that be" to the end. In all this they are the antipodes of the Mormons, whose proclivity to defiance and violent resistance is well known.

2. The social theory and practice of the Oneida Community, though liable to be confounded with Mormonism by those who think carelessly of both as being

alike dangerous departures from established custom, is really at the very opposite extreme from Mormonism. The entire scale of sexual relations may be distributed into three categories, indicated by the three titles: *One wife; Many wives; No wife*. The first category is that of ordinary society; the second, that of the Mormons; the third that of the Oneida Communists; and it is obvious that the difference between *Many wives* and *No wife* is greater than the difference between *Many wives* and *One wife*. The Shakers, as well as the Oneidians, belong to the *No-wife* category; and accordingly there is a great deal more analogy between the Oneida Community and the Shakers, and more practical sympathy, than between the Oneida Community and the Mormons. We hold, however, that the Primitive Church, in its best examples, those of Christ and Paul; in its most significant teachings, such as those of the 7th of 1 Corinthians; in its Communistic tendencies, seen in the Pente-costal revival; and in its avowed ideal of its heavenly home, was and is the true archetype of the *No-wife* system. RESURRECTION was the ladder on which that church was ascending through its whole visible career, and at the top of that ladder was this plain inscription: "No marrying here."

Both the contrasts which we have exhibited between the systems of the Oneida Communists and the Mormons, may be summed up and combined in the following statement: One system represents the civilization of the Old Testament; the other that of the New; war and polygamy appear on one side; non-resistance and freedom for women on the other.

REPORTS OF THE CONVENTION.

FROM THE UTICA HERALD.

Meeting of Clergymen at Syracuse Yesterday—Closed Doors—Resolutions Adopted—Nothing Definite Done.

Pursuant to call, forty-seven clergymen and others met in the Syracuse University yesterday, to take some action looking to the extinction or breaking up of the Oneida Community, on the ground of its alleged immorality.

Chancellor Haven called the meeting to order and named Bishop Huntington as chairman. Bishops Peck and Huntington, Chancellor Haven, Prof. Mears and Rev. Dr. Fowler then had a consultation outside the chapel, and when they returned Bishop Peck offered prayer.

Bishop Huntington said that certain gentlemen, ministers of the gospel and others, thought proper to consult upon the subject whether or not Christian people have not a special duty to perform in relation to what is known as the Oneida Community. Little or no correspondence has passed between them, and there had been no conference except on a limited scale. He requested Prof. Mears to read the circular that had been sent out.

Prof. Mears said the meeting was the result of the call which he read, and said it was intended to be a personal call, and not made public for the present, but it had been published. He was gratified to find so many gentlemen present, and that the subject had excited considerable interest. In the *Utica Herald* of current date he found an excellent article upon the subject to be considered. He had no disposition to suggest that some who had not been called to the meeting had appeared, but it was desirable that only those invited should participate in the proceedings. There was nothing particularly secret to be done, but as they were guests of the officers of the University those gentlemen had a right to say who should be present. The meeting was merely a preliminary one, and it was desirable that there should be some informal discussion before their action was made public.

REPORTERS AND OTHERS EXCLUDED.

Several reporters of the Syracuse press, the representative of the *Herald* and others took the hint and withdrew, not without quietly suggesting to the managers of the meeting that they believed that the success of the proposed effort would be more certainly insured if they were permitted to remain, as the reading public expected to be fully informed of the nature and result of the conference. If the intention of the meeting was to educate public sentiment to favor the abolition of the Oneida Community by legislation, or otherwise, that education could not be commenced too soon, and the opinions of the clergy should be spread broadcast without delay. These suggestions were of no avail at the time, and the reporters withdrew, but it was soon apparent that the exclusion of the reporters and efforts to hold a secret session were not generally favored.

EVERYBODY'S SECRET.

In fact the plan failed signally, as all such plans do, for upon the adjournment of the meeting every reporter who had patiently waited outside in the hall was tendered verbatim and abstract reports of the proceedings by from one to three of the clergymen who did not approve of their exclusion from the conference. Students representing the local press were among those permitted to remain and take notes, and the result of their work was soon public property among the press men. The action taken proved to be of so little practical importance that there was no particular regret expressed over the enforced absence.

WHAT WAS DONE.

After the doors were closed Prof. Mears spent con-

siderable time in reading documents and papers upon the subject of the Oneida Community.

Counselor Hall, of Syracuse, expressed the opinion that at present there was no law upon the statute book which the Oneida Community could be said to be violating. Massachusetts had a law against prostitution and immoral acts which should be adopted by New York State, and that might apply to this Community.

Informal discussion of the subject followed, and Bishop Peck finally offered the following

RESOLUTION.

Resolved, That it is the urgent duty of the people of the State to take and pass measures for the suppression of the immoral practices of the Oneida Community.

When first offered the resolution read "for the suppression of the Oneida Community," but upon Chancellor Haven suggesting that the Community could not be suppressed, the words "immoral practices" were inserted.

Prof. Mears then offered the following, which was designed as an amendment:

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to whom shall be committed all questions of fact and law relating to the Oneida Community, and of measures which ought to be adopted, and report at a future meeting which the committee will call.

After general discussion Bishop Peck accepted the amendment, and the resolutions were adopted.

THE COMMITTEE.

Bishop Huntington was made chairman of the committee and Dr. Beard, of Syracuse, secretary, and then Professor Mears was associated with Bishop Huntington. These gentlemen were requested to make up a committee that will represent all parts of the State, and the chairman was authorized to call a meeting at any time, and any number that may be present will constitute a quorum.

During the discussion, Rev. Mr. Smith, of Oswego, stated that he expected to be interrogated by his people as to what action had been taken in the meeting. He thought those present should take the bull by the horns and do something practical, as the evil complained of was apparent to all.

The meeting then adjourned, and the reporters again entered the chapel.

It is proper to state here that Bishop Huntington made a personal request to the reporters not to make his or other names public, in connection with the committee. Before leaving Syracuse last evening, the *Herald's* representative learned that the newspapers of that city intended making all names public, and giving full reports of the proceedings in secret session, and as the matter was the topic of general conversation about the city during the evening, there seemed to be no reason for concealing any portion of the report, and it is therefore given in substance.

THE COMMUNITY REPRESENTED.

Believing with others that the meeting was to be a public one, Editor W. A. Hinds, of the *AMERICAN SOCIALIST*, one of the publications of the Oneida Community, was present as a reporter. At the door of the University, before the conference was called to order, a young man handed each person entering a copy of the *SOCIALIST*, containing an editorial addressed to Prof. Mears and others, which set forth the important distinctions which the leaders of the Community claim exist between the Community and the Mormons. This article contains the following statement:

"It has lately been generally admitted even by their enemies, that they (the Communists) are not breaking existing laws; and it is understood that new legislation is contemplated. If such legislation should be obtained, the Communists would certainly obey it, though they might justly complain of its *ex post facto* character. They will be faithful to the powers that be to the end. In all this they are the antipodes of the Mormons, whose proclivity to defiance and violent resistance is well known."

The *SOCIALIST* is a very neat and handsomely printed paper, and the *Herald's* representative was not much surprised upon entering the chapel to find that the majority of those present had their faces concealed by the paper, which they appeared to be reading very carefully.

It was intimated that the general exclusion of reporters was due to the fact that the leading men of the conference had been informed that Editor Hinds and other Communists were present—they supposing that the meeting was open to all.

REPORT OF THE SYRACUSE COURIER.

[The Syracuse papers had fuller reports than the *Utica Herald* of the proceedings of the Conference; and we therefore add the following paragraphs from the *Syracuse Courier*, which give a good idea of the discussion which took place after the exclusion of the press representatives:]

Professor Mears gave a brief sketch of the rise and progress of the institution. The movement was headed by Noyes, a graduate of a college. He based his theory on the second chapter of Acts, where it is stated that the early Christians had their possessions in common. But Noyes diverged from the Scriptural view, by holding a Community of persons as well as of goods.

Noyes, in college, was a bright student and promised to be a useful man. His Communistic movement was started at Putney, Vt., in 1847. The people rose against it, and Noyes was obliged to flee. He came to this section about thirty years ago. I may say that these people are good citizens, orderly and cleanly in the manner in which they conduct their home. A similar Community was started at Wallingford, Conn., but it has failed. It did not contain the elements of success that the Oneida Community contains. [A great mistake—the Wallingford Community is still prosperous, and cannot fail until the O. C. fails, as their interests are identical.—Ed. Am. Soc.]

In the Oneida Community, men and women live together

in a sort of concupiscence. No woman has a husband of her own, and no man has a wife of his own. They declare that they live the resurrection life, in which "they neither marry nor are given in marriage."

They are not allowed the right of choice. If they violate this rule and show any particular attachment for one another, they are criticised for so doing. Noyes has great influence among them. Their institution is the outgrowth of vile passion. A person going through the Community sees nothing there to offend. All is secret. Our students who visit the place say that the men look passably well, but that the women have a dejected look, and how such women can be the mothers of an excellent stock of men is one of the problems which the students discuss.

Three or four years ago a similar Community was started in the northeastern part of this State. [Another mistake. It was not similar, and had no connection with the O. C.] The Oneida Community has its location in the very center of the State. I didn't know but that we were to have the State covered with these Communities. That Northern Community, however, has been sold out.

Whatever can be done ought to be done, in New York as it was in Vermont, for the sake of the morals of the State. Chancellor Haven asked whether women ever leave their precincts. The answer was "not much, if at all."

Dr. Fowler asked whether Prof. Mears thought the leaders in the Community were sincere, in comparison with the Mormon leaders. He replied: "I presume they are sincere." Noyes says the Community would be a failure without the present method of social intercourse.

Dr. Fowler—"Is it dying out?"

Ans.—"It shows no signs of it."

Prof. Mears added that they are educating their young men so as to perpetuate their institution. One or more have been at Yale College. The total value of their property is about \$500,000 or \$600,000, according to their estimate.

Bishop Huntington said: "This is not an isolated Community. It should be shown up in the light. There is an impure emanation from it. Young people go there and return with these impure thoughts and associations in their minds."

At this point Dr. Porter, of Hamilton, read a letter from Congressman Baker, in which the writer states that it is a disgrace to the United States that a Mormon delegate should be admitted to Congress from Utah, and that it is a disgrace to New York that such a Community as this is allowed to exist in the State. The speaker held that this system is a foul blot on civilization.

Rev. J. T. Brownell, of Lyons, said that the least we could do would be to find a way, if possible, to suppress this evil. Or, as Hercules said, "Either find a way, or make one."

Bishop Peck said he felt it incumbent on him to express his sentiments. He indorsed the view given, that the exigencies of this particular time demand that we do something. He indorsed Congressman Baker's letter. This meeting should have succession and permanence. We should neither look for sudden success nor ultimate failure. The evil is too deep-seated to be easily eradicated. It is in the hands of sagacious men. The method of treatment must be moral and scriptural. If the Community stood alone, without sympathy from the outside public, and with less sagacious leaders, it might be overcome by a popular uprising. Hot-headed men will do us no good in this work. The opposition must be soundly scriptural. The Bishop moved that a committee be appointed to investigate questions of fact and law, and to report to this body at a subsequent meeting.

The chair called on Mr. L. W. Hall, a prominent member of the Syracuse bar, to present the legal phase of the question.

Mr. Hall said it would naturally be presumed that such offenses have been treated elsewhere. Repressive efforts have been taken in Massachusetts and Connecticut against adultery and lascivious cohabitation. In our own State adultery has not been made a penal offense. In regard to this particular case it occurs to me there must be specific legislation. If we can get a moral sentiment aroused, public feeling turned toward Oneida, we will not need severe legislation. If in the statute in regard to disorderly persons the words "all persons living in concupiscence and adultery" were inserted, it would embrace every one in the Oneida Community. Some suppose that it will die out of itself. I think legislation would speed it on its way. Bishop Peck's resolution will cover what we ought to do at this meeting.

The chair here asked what Congressman Baker means by saying that this is an indictable offense in common law.

Mr. Hall replied that there is a difference of opinion on this point. I don't think it is an indictable offense, as the law stands.

Prof. Mears thought the resolution of Bishop Peck nearly sufficient, but that there ought to be another committee to investigate the legal phase.

Bishop Peck opposed the dividing of the responsibility between two committees.

Chancellor Haven would like to have the committee inquire into the law and practice of the Oneida Community, and into the feeling of citizens of the State, without saying anything about suppression. He had no doubt it is the wish of Christian people to arouse the feeling of the people against this system. Bishop Huntington was right in saying that it diffuses an impure sentiment. He would like the committee to inquire what is the duty of Christians and citizens. If they tell us we ought to express our opinion and stop, we will do that. If they tell us we should petition the legislature, we will probably do that. He thought in the resolutions they should not assume what they were going to do. He didn't want a committee to tell them how they ought to suppress.

Dr. Torrey agreed with Chancellor Haven's views.

Rev. Mr. Smith, of Oswego, thought much more decisive action should be taken. He wished every man, woman and child to understand that there is no doubt as to the immorality of this institution. He thought they should not be afraid to express themselves in unequivocal terms in regard to the Oneida Community.

Chancellor Haven said they wanted a committee to tell them simply how they ought to act here, if they had the time to act. He was not afraid to express his views.

Dr. Fisk thought Mr. Smith, of Oswego, is laboring under a misapprehension.

A lively discussion followed on Prof. Mears' resolution, which was finally adopted in a slightly modified form.

Bishop Peck moved that Bishop Huntington be chairman, with power to select the rest of the committee. Carried.

At the suggestion of Bishop Huntington, two other members were also elected. These were Dr. A. F. Beard, of Syracuse, and Prof. Mears, of Hamilton College.

Dr. O. H. Warren thought the committee should be selected so as to represent the different portions of the State.

Dr. C. W. Bennett was convinced that there was a lamentable ignorance in regard to this Community. Not one in five hundred of the citizens of Syracuse, living so near the Community, knows the facts. He thought people should be posted.

Prof. Comfort, of Syracuse, said that the announcement had gotten into the papers in some way. Reporters at the door had told him a few minutes before that they thought it a mistake to eject them. He moved that the Secretary furnish the press with the resolutions and such other matter as he saw proper.

Chancellor Haven agreed. He said we have nothing to be ashamed of. Let the people of the State know what is done.

The convention then adjourned, subject to the call of the committee.

What the Communists Say of the Clerical Conference—Interview With a Member of the Community.

The ministerial conference which met yesterday at the Syracuse University, to concert measures with reference to the Oneida Community, drew to our city, among other visitors, Wm. A. Hinds, a member of the Community and Editor of their paper, the *AMERICAN SOCIALIST*. The following report of an interview with him by our reporter last evening, will interest our readers as showing what our neighbors, the Communists, think of the present movement against them.

Reporter.—Well, Mr. Hinds, the ministers are trying to stir up some excitement against your society?

Mr. Hinds.—That's nothing new; it has been tried over and over again.

Rep.—Then your people are not greatly disturbed?

Mr. H.—O, no; why should we be?

Rep.—That's more than I can tell, but what can they do? You probably have some idea.

Mr. H.—Dr. J. W. Mears, of Hamilton College, is the prime mover in the affair, and he said to a reporter of the *Utica Herald* last summer, "he thought if the Community were ever disturbed it would have to be by the passage of a special statute to fit their case." The object of the conference probably is to organize a preaching crusade against the Community, with the ulterior purpose of effecting some special legislation that will fit our case. Even Dr. Mears admits that at present we transgress no law.

Rep.—Is that so?

Mr. H.—Certainly, and we claim to be law-abiding citizens, and to be an example of good morals to all our neighbors. The call for the conference assumes that we are in "deadly opposition to Christian morality." But how? We are never accused of theft, arson, fraud, murder; our members are never dragged before the courts to answer for deeds of crime; we live in harmony with one another and with our neighbors; we never disturb the peace of families; we do not force our peculiar principles upon the public; we do not establish new Communities; we are simply trying to carry out our idea of a state of society which had its first illustration among Christian believers more than 1800 years ago. Even if the common churches do not agree with us, that is no reason why they should institute special measures against us. They have learned to tolerate differences among themselves; why shouldn't they exercise the same toleration toward us?

Rep.—But you have peculiar social views?

Mr. H.—Granted; but they do not in our Community produce disorders, or any of the evils of a loose social system; and if we don't interfere in any way with the rights of others, why should we be troubled?

Rep.—Isn't it probable that the success which has attended legislation against the Mormons has encouraged the promoters of the present movement against you?

Mr. H.—Possibly; but there is no good reason for coupling us with the Mormons. We are not defiant in our attitude toward law or government, and have never threatened resistance to "the powers that be." In fact, it is difficult to pick up any points of resemblance between the two organizations. The Mormons are not Communists in any sense, except as every church is a Community in some of its features. Our social system is more at variance with that of the Mormons than with monogamy.

Rep.—Are your neighbors friendly?

Mr. H.—Yes. It would be easy to secure thousands of signatures to a paper indorsing us as good citizens and neighbors. We offered once in the early years of our history, when there was an attempt to disturb us, to dissolve our society if that was the general wish of the surrounding inhabitants; but we were then requested by them, in a document widely circulated and generally signed by the most respectable citizens, to give up that idea. We have since had little trouble, except from an occasional seceder bent on mischief. It is not likely we would remain long in any locality where we were not wanted. But the more widely we are known the larger is our circle of friends. The present agitation will multiply them, and extend the market for our productions, just as the crusade did last summer, which was started by a sensational correspondent of the *New York Times*. If Dr. Mears and his coadjutors were as wise as a learned doctor of old, called Gamaliel, they would let us alone.

Rep.—You thrive on persecution?

Mr. H.—Yes; we shall live and prosper as long as we have persecution. That is the old story—the blood of the martyrs is always the seed of the church. That's been the case, as everybody knows, with the very sects now combined against the Oneida Community. How long is it since the Methodists and Baptists and Presbyterians and Universalists and Unitarians, to say nothing of the Quakers, Shakers and other religious bodies, were small persecuted sects? But persecution strengthened their bond of unity and at the same time made their distinctive principles known; and so they have lived and multiplied their numbers.

Rep.—Suppose these self-appointed guardians of society should succeed in dispersing the Community, what then?

Mr. H.—Two things would be very likely to happen. First, several Communities might be formed in place of the present one. We are often urged to start branch societies, and, I suppose, have been offered land for at least a score of Com-

munities in different States; but we have steadily declined all such offers, and are likely to for the present, if we are left in peace. Secondly, in case of dispersion we might feel at liberty to disseminate our principles by sending evangelists everywhere, and so multiply our numbers possibly a hundred-fold. But then all talk about breaking up the Community, blotting it out, etc., is sensational and extravagant—dangerous even to those who give utterance to it. The most that can be done is to get some new law passed that will require us to change our sexual practices; and if this is done, we are more likely to obey it than fight it.

Rep.—Is it likely that any law will be passed against Communal living?

Mr. H.—No; the law will never undertake to say how many people shall live in the same house. There are Communities in this State nearly one hundred years old, and cooperative living is becoming more and more popular, especially in the cities. And so it may as well be understood, first as last, that the Oneida Community cannot be broken up unless the ministers are prepared to stir up mobs against us, and that is something they could hardly engage in with safety or self-respect. Their language and proceedings are already so unguarded, that some think they are liable to prosecution for conspiracy to injure our business.

Rep.—To how many people do you give employment outside of your society?

Mr. H.—The number varies with the season—sometimes reaches 350, and at other times not more than 100.

Rep.—You must pay large sums in the way of taxes?

Mr. H.—Yes; for the year 1866 our taxes of one kind and another, direct and indirect, amounted to more than ten thousand dollars. This fact ought to have a little weight in our favor, we think, and does for that matter with unprejudiced people. They will not stand by and see our households and our industries destroyed without at least inquiring well the reason. By the way, I have been informed that a legal gentleman of your city who was present at the Conference to-day, told them that the Oneida Community were transgressing no law.

Rep.—That must have been an unpleasant pill to swallow! And this suggests the inquiry, whether you have not generally fared better at the hands of the legal fraternity than of the clergy?

Mr. H.—We have great respect for religion and religious people, and shall not abuse any class, whatever treatment they may give us. But evidently the study of law inclines a man to look at all sides of questions and to consider carefully the motives of action; moreover, lawyers necessarily become thoroughly cognizant of the imperfections of the present social system. This may incline them to regard if not with favor, at least without prejudice, attempts to improve upon the present social system. And certainly the Community has had some wise friends among the lawyers—such as the Hon. Timothy Jenkins, Judge Holmes, James Nye, afterwards a United States Senator, and Ward Hunt, now a member of the highest court in the land.

Rep.—Did you attend the Conference at the University this afternoon?

Mr. H.—I read the call in the papers, and feeling some interest in the proceedings and supposing, as the call was made public, that members of the press would be made welcome, was on hand at the opening of the session. They soon requested all who hadn't been specially invited, including the members of the press, to withdraw from the Conference; and so I had not the pleasure of taking notes of their discussion. I should have been glad to have served as a witness and submitted to any amount of questioning and cross-questioning, and what would have suited me still better would have been to have made them a little speech, which I should have wound up by inviting the Conference as a body to visit the Community, and to hold their next session in our hall! But as I didn't have an opportunity to extend this invitation to them, perhaps you will do it for me. You may assure them the Community will be glad to welcome them, one and all, at any time.

FROM THE SYRACUSE DAILY STANDARD.

A SOCIALIST INTERVIEWED.

There arrived in Syracuse yesterday morning Mr. W. A. Hinds, Associate Editor of the AMERICAN SOCIALIST. He put up at the Vanderbilt House, and was there seen by several representatives of the city press. He stated his intention of attending the conference, and reporting the same for his paper. He was not averse to being interviewed, however, and therefore a representative of the *Standard* questioned him regarding several points.

Reporter.—“How will this church movement affect your Community?”

Mr. Hinds.—“It is really a continuation of a movement that has been in progress for some time. It does not come upon us as anything new, and we are not disturbed at all by it.”

“Are there any laws in the State which the Community are now violating?”

Mr. Hinds.—“There are none that we are aware of. We have taken counsel on that matter with good lawyers, and in fact Dr. Mears, who is the foremost leader in the present movement, in a published interview, admitted that there is no law on the statute-book which the members of the Community can be said to violate.”

“What must be the first movement of the conference people?”

Mr. Hinds.—“This body has no legal character; all they can possibly do is to concentrate public opinion against us, and they may take measures to carry matters before the Legislature with a view of inducing special legislation.”

“Have there ever been any attempts to induce special legislation against you?”

Mr. Hinds.—“There was an attempt last winter, '77, to introduce a bill bearing on our case; at least we heard there was to be one introduced, but why it was not and why there was no action taken we never heard.”

“Have there been any legal proceedings commenced against the Community at any time?”

Mr. Hinds.—“There have been several attempts, mostly confined to the first years of our existence, to get the Community indicted before the grand juries of Madison and Oneida counties.”

“What was the result?”

Mr. Hinds.—“These attempts, so far as Madison county is concerned, entirely failed, owing to the fact that the grand jury considered us orderly, industrious and good citizens,

and held that no indictment of that kind would stand against us. In Oneida county there was an attempt also to get us indicted during the first two or three years of our existence as a society, but nothing serious resulted from it. There was also an attempt made to indict us in Oneida county some twelve or fourteen years ago, which was instigated by a seceder, who claimed on his withdrawal from our Community not only the property he put in, but wages for himself and family while they remained members. This was contrary to the stipulation of our covenant, and we refused his demands. Hoping to force us to pay them he started the prosecution against us. None of these legal proceedings ever had any very serious consequences. In the last case Ward Hunt, of Utica, now a Justice of the Supreme Court, was applied to by this seceder to take up against us, but he utterly refused, and on the contrary, after thoroughly understanding our social principles and practices, took our side of the controversy.”

“What other legal gentlemen have the Community consulted?”

Mr. Hinds.—“Quite a number, but I will mention particularly the late Timothy Jenkins, who was a firm friend and adviser of the Community; also, Mr. James Nye, who was afterward Senator Nye; on several occasions he aided the Community with wise counsel. The same is true of Judge Holmes, formerly of Morrisville, now in Michigan, and others.”

“Have you taken any counsel lately on the new movement?”

Mr. Hinds.—“No, sir! we do not see any occasion for it. I don't think we shall take any action about it in any way; we claim to be good people and law-abiding citizens. If any measure should be passed by the Legislature bearing upon us we should meet it in a peaceable spirit; and here let me say, that although the Oneida Community is very frequently coupled with the Mormons, there are some very wide distinctions between the two organizations. This is one: We are no fighters! We don't propose to resist any law that might be passed. In the first place, we don't believe a law is likely to be passed especially applicable to our case, but if there should be, we shouldn't quarrel. We are thorough non-resistants. There is another distinction between us and the Mormons. We don't believe in the propriety of any ownership of woman by man, and in that respect we are further from the Mormons than even common marriage permits; we claim that our system has all the guarantees of good order that pertain to common marriage; that it produces none of the fruits that are supposed to be inseparable from licentiousness.”

“Will you please specify how your system produces none of the fruits supposed to be inseparable from licentiousness?”

Mr. Hinds.—“Well, there is good order, temperance, freedom from quarreling and from all the common vices; a great amount of attention is given to education and improvement of various kinds; there is industry and thrift; there is no pauperism among us. Can such things prevail, do you think, in a Community where licentiousness is the rule?”

“In what respect do you claim your system is superior to that of monogamy?”

Mr. Hinds.—“I don't know as I care at the present time to urge the superiority of our system. We find no fault with marriage when it is properly observed.”

“Are there not monogamist families which come up to your highest ideal?”

Mr. Hinds.—“I have no doubt but what there are very many happy families, and I do not care to institute any special comparison between our system and monogamy in this respect; but we are fully persuaded that our system is an improvement on *any other* that has gone before it, and what we ask is simply liberty to carry out our system in a quiet, peaceable way, disturbing no one, interfering with no families outside of the Community, crowding our principles upon no one, and seeking no proselytes—simply minding our own business.”

“Well, to return to the conference; what sentiment do you expect it will be able to awaken?”

Mr. Hinds.—“Oh, the sentiment will be a divided one. Of course, a certain proportion of the people will think it very desirable that the Community should be suppressed, but then another part, which is continually growing, will demand justice and fair play, and moreover it will naturally lead to renewed discussion of the general subject of Socialism.”

“Do you await its issue with calmness?”

Mr. Hinds.—“Yes, sir! whatever comes out of this we await the issue with calmness. But in our opinion it is all nonsense for this conference or any other body of persons to think of breaking up the Oneida Community. We have been settled in our present locality for thirty years, and have built up large business interests; we certainly have some rights in this matter, and among these rights is that of living as we do in a combined household; there is nothing wrong that can be made out of that. When these people talk about breaking us up it looks like a conspiracy to injure us, and is certainly the kind of talk a Christian body should not indulge in. If we break any existing laws, we are amenable to their just penalties, and if any new laws are made they can only affect our conduct as individuals; they cannot touch the question of our existence as an organized body; Communism of property and living in combined households can never be made crimes.”

DELEGATES TO THE SYRACUSE CONVENTION.

Rev. R. A. Clarke (Presbyterian); Rev. James A. Porter (Methodist), Brooklyn; Bishop Peck (Methodist), Syracuse; Chancellor Haven, (Methodist), Syracuse; C. S. Myers, Owasco; Rev. C. J. Shrimpton, Fayetteville; Rev. Dr. Porter (Episcopal), Hamilton; Rev. Dr. O. H. Warren, Editor of the *Northern Christian Advocate* of Syracuse, (Methodist); Rev. Dr. Torrey (Presbyterian), Cazenovia; Rev. Dr. P. H. Fowler (Presbyterian), Utica; Rev. E. Van Slyke (Reformed), Syracuse; Dr. R. M. Bingham (Methodist), Rome; Rev. Dr. Nelson Millard (Presbyterian), Syracuse; Rev. J. E. Pratt (Episcopal) Syracuse; Rev. J. T. Brownell (Methodist), Lyons; Prof. J. R. French, LL.D. (Methodist), Syracuse; Rev. L. M. Stratton (Methodist), Syracuse; J. M. Gilbert (Methodist), Syracuse; Rev. Mr. Curtis (Methodist), Onondaga Valley; Rev. N. E. Jenkins (Protestant Methodist), Syracuse; Rev. Mr. Kinney, M. Merriek, Syracuse; Rev. Mr. Smith (Congregationalist), Oswego; Rev. C. M. Tyler (Congregationalist); Rev. O. A. Houghton (Methodist), Syracuse; T. B. Noss, Syracuse; Rev. Dr. Richmond Fisk (Universalist), Syracuse; Rev. Mr. Ferris; P. H. Agan (Unitarian), Syracuse; Rev.

*Full half of these delegates hail from Syracuse.

S. P. Baird (Methodist); Rev. J. P. Sankey, Rochester; Rev. Dr. Holbrook, Syracuse; Rev. T. E. Pattison (Episcopal), Syracuse; Rev. E. C. Curtis (Methodist), Syracuse; Rev. G. K. Travis, Rev. Bishop Huntington (Episcopal), Syracuse; Prof. Mears, Hamilton College; Prof. J. J. Brown (Methodist), Syracuse University; Rev. E. G. Thurber (Presbyterian), Syracuse; Rev. Dr. A. F. Beard (Congregationalist), Syracuse; and Rev. Dr. H. R. Lockwood (Episcopal), Syracuse.

COMMENTS OF THE PRESS.

FROM THE UTICA HERALD.

EDITORIAL COMMENT OF FEB. 15TH.

The conference at Syracuse yesterday, to take steps to demolish the Oneida Community, was, to speak plainly, a ridiculous failure. It began the task of manufacturing public sentiment by excluding the reporters. It is needless to say that any body of men which is afraid of the reporters, and the publicity that follows their presence, is not capable of inaugurating any great movement. It appeared subsequently that the conference had no plan of action, and simply appointed a committee to report at a future meeting. It is more than probable that that future meeting will never be held.

FROM THE NEW YORK HERALD.

EDITORIAL COMMENT OF FEB. 15TH.

The Oneida Community has long been an eye-sore to most of the organized religious bodies in the United States, and the sentiments of the various churches found expression yesterday in a convention, which was held at Syracuse, and attended by prominent members of several denominations. As was admitted by the prime mover of the newly organized opposition, the members of the Oneida Community are “good citizens, orderly and cleanly in the manner in which they conduct their home,” but it is useless to deny that their habit of holding women as well as property is one which civilization cannot regard with favor or respect. It must be admitted that they are not breaking any existing laws, and that their refraining from proselytizing relieves them from the suspicion, so unavoidable when the Mormon problem is considered, that their peculiar faith is stimulated by uncontrolled animal passions. The character and reputation of the Community and its members are so good that probably no legal action will ever be taken by their immediate neighbors, who know them best and who dislike the peculiar feature of the organization as much as other respectable people do. The fact remains, however, that woman as transferable property, whether on grounds material or spiritual (so called), is to the great majority of humanity, an idea too abhorrent and unnatural to be entertained for an instant, and that those who so regard her must exist by sufferance and not because of respect for their peculiar theories. It is possible for the Oneida Community, by exercising what, according to their spokesmen, would not be a great degree of self-denial, to quash all opposition present or prospective by yielding that peculiar feature of their practice which gives offense. They claim not to be lustful or immoral, and the public would gladly believe as much of any body of people so industrious and inoffensive; but self-denial, in one way or another, has, ever since Christianity was instituted, been necessary to an agreement between the many bodies professing the same faith. Aside from their customs regarding the sexual relation the Oneida Communists are valuable members of society. Why should they weaken the good influence which they naturally desire to exert by a practice which offends every outsider who hears of it?

FROM THE SYRACUSE DAILY COURIER.

EDITORIAL COMMENT OF FEB. 15TH.

The Oneida Community claims to be a religious institution, and the members insist that they do no wrong. Certainly they do not violate any of the laws of the State. They live in harmony with their neighbors, and are a thrifty people. Their religion, as they call it, is, to say the least, peculiar. There is no marriage or giving in marriage among them, but they consort with one another promiscuously. The children born are carefully reared, and it is said that it is seldom, if ever, that one of them dies in infancy.

There have been fifty children born alive in the Community in nine years, and *not one has died*, and all are now well and free from disease. Five children have died at or about birth, and there has not been a single case of abortion. In the United States, 30 per cent. of the children die under ten years of age. In Oneida, there has not been a case of croup, cholera infantum, or diphtheria, for fifteen years. In relation to the management of the children, Dr. T. R. Noyes, a son of the founder, makes the following statement, which is well worthy the attention of all who have the care of children:

“Our system of nursing our young children, if it can be called a system, is nothing more than the ordinary one, with some perfection in detail which is made possible by our combined mode of life. An infant is cared for by the mother in

her own room during the nursing period and for some time longer. The nursing period varies from eight months to a year or fifteen months, according as the season permits. We do not think it advisable to nurse longer than a year. When the child begins to drink we sometimes begin giving it oatmeal, boiled two hours and strained through a fine cloth, or pearl barley, with the cow's milk, which is generally from one selected cow. Whether it takes these preparations or not, we get it as soon as we can on a diet containing more or less coarse unbolted wheat flour, and as soon as possible we come down to three meals a day, with nothing between meals. We give our children ripe fruit freely after they have learned to eat solid food, and avoid the habitual use of the bland, starchy foods, arrowroot, etc., as much as possible. They eat no meat until five or six years old. At about fifteen months old the mothers put their children into a nursery during the day, retaining them nights for some time longer. In this nursery they are cared for by experienced nurses, and at about four years they enter the children's department. The rooms the children occupy have a south exposure, plenty of light, no trees within one hundred feet. Our house drainage is as good as we can devise, and the entry of sewer-gas in any form is vigilantly guarded against. Slop-closets are disinfected every morning after using, and locked the remainder of the day, being connected with a draught chimney. In a word, we aim to give them pure air, plenty of life in the open air, pure food of a plain quality with very little fine flour, with a little or no medicine."

The Oneida "Home," or residence, is a palace situated among trees, in one of the prettiest spots imaginable, and is arranged and furnished with all modern improvements for labor-saving, convenience and comfort. Great care and attention is given to healthful cooking, ventilation, baths, cleanliness, and sanitary regulations generally.

In all these particulars the Home is a model one, and much better than the average of the homes of the millionaires of the outside world. Of the housekeeping in all departments, too high praise can scarcely be awarded to the Oneida women. No whiter table and bed linen, no brighter silver and glass, no cleaner carpets and floors, no more tasteful hangings and general arrangements can be found anywhere.

The family meet every evening in the hall or chapel, a beautiful frescoed room, with galleries and a stage, and plenty of easy chairs, and light in abundance, and at these meetings every topic of business, literature, science, economy, religion, reform, and discipline is in order, and may be discussed in Committee of the Whole. These meetings are said to be very pleasant and profitable.

FROM A PRESBYTERIAN ELDER.

COMMENT ON THE ACTION OF THE SYNOD IN 1873.

"Why," said he to a Community man, "there is nothing under heaven in the deportment of the Oneida Community toward the society among which it is situated, or toward the State, or the nation, that the strictest Christian moralist can complain of; and to prosecute a people that behaves so well in all the relations of life about which the people has any right to inquire, is just as impossible as it would be for me to get a firm grip with my hand upon the polished surface of this table by which we are seated. Although I am a Presbyterian, and have no fellowship with your social theory, as seen from my point of view, I have just as little with the Synod or Conference of any denomination that would try to put you down by other than moral suasion and a superior example. Indeed, what is the use of trying to legislate a people down when you can get hold of no loose, immoral habits, actions or censurable deeds of any kind, to put down? Heaven knows there are tangible vices and crimes enough both in church and State, to be put down by Synods and Conferences which have the requisite power to do it. But my word for it, just so long as the O. C. continues to conduct itself in the way it has done for a quarter of a century past, you may rest assured that there is no authority in this or any other Christian nation that will molest it, and for the very obvious reason, as I have said, that there is nothing to complain of."

TO LEGISLATORS AND EDITORS.

EDITORIAL COMMENT BY THE AMERICAN SOCIALIST.

It is very important that you, who are so powerful in forming and establishing public opinion, should get a clear and comprehensive view of the issue between the clergy and the Oneida Community, to which we have given so much space in this number of our paper. You will have noticed that although the clergy at the Syracuse Conference were quite unanimous in asserting that an impure influence emanated from the Oneida Community, they failed to mention a single case where bad or immoral actions could be traced to the influence or example of the Community. We assert unhesitatingly that they cannot produce such an instance. It is an assumption on their part, without any proof whatever. If it were true, those living nearest to the Community, their neighbors and business acquaintances, would be

the first to know it and denounce it. But Dr. Mears stated at the Conference that the neighbors of the Community for a distance of several miles were almost unanimous in favor of it, having nothing but good to say of it. Those now attacking the Community live remote from it, in other counties, and know so little about it that on assembling at Syracuse for the purpose of destroying it, their first act, after the customary prayer, was to inquire of Dr. Mears what sort of an institution it was! Of course he told them it was a bad one; whereupon, without more ado, they concluded to make war upon it.

It appears from the admissions of these very clergymen that the harm which the Oneida Community is charged with doing is entirely conjectural and without proof. In weighing the matter you should ask yourselves, on the other hand, *what good the Community is doing?* Leaving out of the account their peculiar social theories, the affirmative evidence on this point is overwhelming and confessed by all, the clergy included. They are "good neighbors," "pay one hundred cents on the dollar," their "word is as good as their bond," their "products are sure to be exactly as represented," they "have increased the value of property in their neighborhood," are "quiet, cleanly, orderly, honest, good-natured, hospitable, live well, furnish good dinners, and mind their own business." In all the points by which men are ordinarily judged there is nothing but praise for the Communists.

The only point of difference, then, is in regard to the social and sexual theories of the Community, and we shall expect you to weigh this dispassionately. You should ask yourselves whether the old social system is entirely perfect and above criticism? Is it decreed that we shall not progress and improve that part of our lives as well as any other? If not, must there not be room for study and experiment by honest people? The worst enemies of the Community admit, as Dr. Mears did at the Conference, that its members are sincere and honest. The charge is that they are fanatical and mistaken. Ask yourselves whether their record proves this. The Community takes care of its own, and throws off no wrecks such as are constantly falling from ordinary society. It has furnished no paupers, no criminals, no abandoned women, no neglected children. Is it not, then, working out a valuable experiment? Hundreds of letters are received from persons representing all classes and professions, declaring that it is doing an immense benefit to the world. Abundance of evidence can be had bearing on this point when it is wanted. We ask you to consider the matter candidly and impartially, and to then speak out fearlessly.

WHAT THE CLERGY ARE LEARNING.

EDITORIAL COMMENT BY THE AMERICAN SOCIALIST.

The forty-and-odd clergymen of New York State who lately met in conference at Syracuse, to organize an attack on the Oneida Community, acquired some valuable additions to their general stock of knowledge and enlightenment, and there is every chance of their securing still more if the war continues. Their gain in this instance is mainly due to the accident of their having to consider a legal question. In law a tolerable degree of exactness of thought is required. The average clergyman is apt to be a little one-sided in his views of things. His avocation consists in opposing and denouncing in general terms what his predecessors, centuries ago perhaps, decided to be bad, and in rigidly upholding what they declared to be the correct ideas. All his talk must conform to the creed and traditions of his church, and there is small chance for new light to penetrate his mind. In fact, it is in some sense his duty to shut out new light. We say this is the tendency with all clergymen. They are apt to take things for granted, and denounce before they investigate; which exposes them to grave danger of doing injustice to persons holding doctrines and practices which are a little new or unusual.

The clergymen who met at Syracuse the other day came together with one general object in mind. They went away with that object considerably modified and circumscribed. In the newspaper notices of the Convention we find the purpose of the gathering stated in such expressions as the following (the italics are ours): "A meeting for the *suppression* of the Oneida Community;" "a movement for the *eradication* of the Oneida Community;" "to *remove a blot* on the Empire State;" "to *suppress a blot* (?) on the social history of our State;" "to take action looking to the *extinction* or *breaking up* of the Oneida Community;" "the Conference *to demolish* the Oneida Community," "to take measures to *stamp it out*," etc. That this was the general idea held by the delegates is evident from their ea-

gerness to "take the bull by the horns and do something practical," as one of them said; and from the fact that the first resolution offered by Dr. Mears ran thus:

"Resolved, That it is the urgent duty of the people of the State to take and pass measures for the *suppression of the Oneida Community.*"

We are told in the reports of the Conference that when this was read Chancellor Haven suggested that the Oneida Community itself could not be suppressed. What! Not suppress it, not stamp it out? The delegates began to consider. Few of them had any personal or exact knowledge of the Community. They had merely heard some bad stories, such as ministers are supposed never to hear, and were ready to act on the strength of common rumor and gossip. They had assembled to "wipe out" an alleged "blot" with the old ecclesiastical sponge. That was all, and the matter seemed simple. But they had stumbled upon a difficulty at the start. The Oneida Community itself could not be suppressed, said Chancellor Haven. What then? They were forced to inquire, What is the Oneida Community? A Society holding and practicing peculiar sexual theories. That was the point uppermost in their thoughts, and it was all they saw at first. But now they suddenly acquired a new idea. In its legal aspect, the Oneida Community is a business co-partnership, organized under the laws of the State, occupying substantial brick buildings situated on good unencumbered land of which they hold the title-deeds, and doing a large and perfectly legitimate manufacturing business. That view of the matter gave the Community a sort of permanent look. Evidently there is no power in the State, and certainly not in the Churches, to "suppress," "eradicate," "extinguish," "break up," "demolish," or "stamp out" the persons composing such a Society, so long as they obey the general laws of the land; and it is getting to be well understood that mere questions of belief, no matter how ultra or peculiar, cannot be proceeded against under our Constitution. What then could the Conference do? All that was left was for the meeting to resolve to try to suppress certain alleged "immoral practices" of the Oneida Community; and accordingly these two words "immoral practices" were inserted in the resolution between the words "suppression" and "Oneida Community." Then a prominent lawyer, who was present by invitation, indorsed what Dr. Mears and his friends had been forced to confess some months ago, viz., that the members of the Community are violating no existing laws. Therefore the aforesaid "immoral practices" could not at present be called illegal practices, and the only course was to get a new law passed which would make them illegal. So the Conference finally settled down to that plan. The clergymen are going to work to manufacture public opinion which will, they hope, eventually enable them to procure such new legislation as they want. We shall see how they succeed.

This first tumble from the high-heeled "stamping-out" attitude to a patient working on public opinion, with, at the best, an even chance of winning or losing their case, took a good deal of the tumultuous feeling out of the delegates. The more calm and dignified of them urged that the "Conference had better make haste slowly and carefully."

It is evident that some of the simplest and most rudimentary ideas of justice to the Community are gradually dawning on the minds of the clergy. They came to a point in August last where they confessed that the Communists were breaking no laws of the State. Now they are learning that they must discriminate between the legal status of a person or Community in regard to property, business, household, etc., and his or its religious and social doctrines and practices. Families have, and always will have, a right to live in combined households and own their property in common if they choose to do so. The next lesson for the clergy will naturally be that they must not act on rumor or assumptions where accurate knowledge is within their reach. They must distinguish between *alleged* immoral practices, and those which have been proven to be so in fact. They must acquire enough of the judicial habit of mind to try a man before sentencing him; to investigate a case before denouncing or condemning anybody. It is to be hoped, also, that these zealous divines will proceed so gently that they will not put themselves in a bad attitude before the law as conspiring to injure the business and security of those who are in the eye of the law wholly innocent. That would be an indictable offense—a crime. We are of the opinion that the more temperate and forbearing counsels will prevail among them, as they did at the Syracuse Conference; and that they will one day come to understand that a change is begun in society

which, under Divine guidance, will lead on to a happier and purer life for them as well as for us.

"EVIL TO HIM WHO EVIL THINKS."

EDITORIAL COMMENT OF THE AMERICAN SOCIALIST.

The opposition in the public mind to the social system and life of the Oneida Community is based, we think, to a large extent on a misunderstanding of the theory and facts of that system and life. The Community in describing their system have sometimes called it *complex-marriage*. Allowing the Community to define this term, it may be unobjectionable. With the members of the Community it means simply a mutual, sacred obligation between the all of one sex to support and protect the all of the other sex, and thus place their Communal home and relations on a basis of security and perpetuity. But this is not the definition which society around us place upon it. With them it means, or is thought to mean, vastly more. The term Marriage, throughout the world, whether monogamic or polygamic, means and involves the subjection of woman to man. It gives to man the control of her person and her sexual nature. The woman is bound to "love, honor and obey," and this obedience includes obedience to the sexual passions and desires of man. The wife is subject to the call of the husband both theoretically and, in the great mass of the world's life, either willingly or unwillingly, practically. Now outside inquirers, when we describe the social system of the Oneida Community as one of *complex-marriage*, immediately carry over to it the idea of marriage that universally prevails. The conception fills them naturally and justly with abhorrence. They see in it, not simply the subjection of one woman to one man, but the subjection of each woman in the Community to all the men. Knowing what the simple form of subjection sometimes involves, they conceive that the complex form must be full of the grossest and most revolting abominations. Can they be blamed, allowing their conception to be true, for detesting such a system and wishing it "wiped out?" Blame rather their ignorance and the foolish zeal which persecutes and denounces before investigating and knowing the truth.

The social order of Oneida Communism is not a complex system of marriage in any such sense as the above language would imply. The term *complex-marriage* as applied to it can only be used subject to special definition, and for want of a better. Historically, the Communal relation of the Oneida system grew out of the spiritual relation which its original members conceived they had come into toward Christ. Understanding from the New Testament and from personal experience, that in accepting Christ as a Savior they come individually into a heart-marriage to him, they found that the correlated New Testament fact followed, that all who are thus married to Christ come into the relation toward one another of mutual brotherhood. The life and spirit into which they had been baptized made them of "one heart and one soul," and they followed not merely the historic example of the Pentecostal believers, but also what they felt to be the present afflatus of the Holy Spirit of all Christian brotherhood, in organizing all their life-relations on the basis of Communism. Theoretically, and as far as it has been carried out practically, this Communism has lifted both men and women in the Community out of bondage to one another. Instead of any such subjection of woman to man as pertains to monogamy and polygamy, multiplied by the hundred-fold in the Community relation, woman in the Oneida Community is made free. She is freed from compulsory and undesired child-bearing; she is freed from the compulsory and undesired sexual approach and control of every man. Her person is sacred; her support is guaranteed. No man has the right to impose on her any attention or any personal intercourse that is disagreeable. Any appeal she might make from attempted imposition of this kind would be sustained by the united voice of the Community. If she bears children it is by her own free consent. Her relations to those children after they are born are simple, sweet and free. The care of them she shares with the Community, and by this sharing she is lifted out of care-bondage, which is the almost universal attendant of the social system of the world.

It seems to us that these are facts which ought to be known and pondered by all who are condemning and persecuting the Oneida Community. They are our strongest defense with all right-thinking, liberal-hearted men and women. A system which secures such results is deserving of charitable and just treatment, for it holds within it things which meet the best hopes and the best desires of men and women. There is not a good or beautiful feature of the prevailing social life of the race which true Oneida Communism does not conserve and cherish. There is not a bad feature which it does not frown upon and abjure.

The following passage from the address of Lieutenant-Governor Dorsheimer of New York at the exercises commemorative of the removal from the old capital to the new, might have been read with profit at the Syracuse Conference:

"The third monument of our greatness has been the toleration of all races, creeds, opinions and churches.

Religious hatred never governed here. There was never here any religious test to office or citizenship; nor was any man ever punished by this government on the score of his faith. We are so used to this blessing that we do not know its worth. But when one recalls the fierce strifes of sects which filled Europe at a time when this colony welcomed every sect—when one recalls the gloomy superstitions amid which New England passed her childhood—when one recalls the great effort it cost England in our own day to relieve Ireland from a church to which the people were aliens, we may appreciate at its real value this the consummate flower of Christian charity and statesmanship."

COMMUNITY ITEMS.

ONEIDA.

—"To-night's the day—I speak it with great sorrow—When we were all to be blown up to-morrow."

—The amount of wages paid to outsiders by the Oneida Community during 1878 was \$81,379.09.

—The number of our cattle-herd is of course constantly fluctuating. Just now it is 105: 55 Ayshires, 10 Holsteins and 40 grades.

—The children take two Turkish baths per week. Their guardians say that the bath makes them hardy and that they are much less liable to take cold than formerly.

—The diverse accounts which appear in the papers about us make us think that the O. C. must be like the elephant who couldn't be taken in at a glance or by one pair of spectacles.

—Silk-skeining is done at the house by several of the women who work at it a part of each day. We were interested to learn the other morning that twelve pounds of silk which were brought to them were made into 7,200 skeins.

—Two of our men attended the auction sale of imported Jersey, Guernsey and Ayrshire cattle which took place at Philadelphia on the 11th inst., and purchased "Joan"—a two-year old Ayrshire heifer: sire, "Winton;" grandsire, "Prince 2d."

—Our physician reports that, owing to excellent sanitary arrangements, the Community has been for several years entirely free from typhoid fever and other intestinal disorders which result from bad drainage, impure water and unhygienic cooking.

—There are twenty-one scholars in the children's school. Their ages range from seven to twelve. Nineteen of the smaller ones—between four and seven—also receive daily tuition. There is besides a class of fourteen of the young people which is taught by two of our young men who were educated at Yale College.

—The health of the children thus far this winter has been remarkably good. There has not been a case among them of measles, whooping-cough, diphtheria, mumps or chicken-pox. There was one case of scarlet-fever. A little girl who went to Wallingford late in the fall developed symptoms of that disease soon after arriving there. The attack was a very light one, and as she was immediately put into quarantine, contagion from the disease was effectually cut off.

—Our Community census (including O. C. and W. C.) on January 1st, 1879, stood as follows:

Members between 90 and 100.....	1
" " 80 " 90.....	6
" " 70 " 80.....	21
" " 60 " 70.....	31
" " 50 " 60.....	40
" " 40 " 50.....	46
" " 30 " 40.....	49
" " 20 " 30.....	27
" " 10 " 20.....	26
" " 0 " 10.....	54

Total.....301

Average age, 37 years and 9 months.

—In the early days of the O. C. there was a great deal of reciprocity of labor between the sexes—the men helping the women to cook and wash and iron, and the women helping the men to weed onions, pick strawberries and build fences; and when there was any great undertaking on hand which required an extra exertion, like haying or harvesting corn, a large "bee" was called and an army composed of nearly every member of the Community marched in couples to the fields of action, led by the gay and festive music of the fife and drum. The haying season, instead of being the burden it is ordinarily considered by farmers, was a series of gala days. The women followed close upon the scythes which were swung by the stronger arms of the men, and they

"Raked the meadow sweet with hay" from pure attraction, and not from a sense of drudging

duty. When harvest-time came many a golden sheaf which the dying October sun shone upon attested the grand results which may be achieved by the industrial combination of the sexes. There were huskings in the field in the afternoon and husking in the barn of an evening, with stories and games and dances. "Many hands make light work," and it was wonderful what those bees accomplished. But those days are gone, and gone are many of the customs which made that pioneer life, when every nerve and sinew were strained to fullest action, as delightful as a dream. Still, we often have evidence that it requires but a suitable occasion to fan into flame this early enthusiasm. There is, in fact, a tri-weekly bee in which survives much of the zest of the olden times. On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons a party of volunteers go to the laundry for an hour to fold and iron clothes, thus shortening the regular work there by one day, and also reducing the expenses of the department \$10.00 per week.

SIXTEEN YEARS' TAXES OF THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY.

Amount paid in 1863,	\$ 2,206.89
" " 1864,	6,194.41
" " 1865,	8,591.24
" " 1866,	10,819.17
" " 1867,	4,268.74
" " 1868,	2,410.13
" " 1869,	1,500.87
" " 1870,	4,180.67
" " 1871,	1,409.45
" " 1872,	1,327.43
" " 1873,	1,532.49
" " 1874,	1,381.50
" " 1875,	1,613.65
" " 1876,	1,392.57
" " 1877,	1,105.09
" " 1878,	1,168.20
Total,	\$51,102.50

Calling the average number of the O. C. 275 and the average population of the whole country 35,000,000, a little computation will show the reader that had the people generally paid as heavy taxes *pro rata* for the last sixteen years as the Oneida Communists, the national debt might have been wiped out and a fair sum have been left for State, county and town taxes.

STATISTICS OF A SINGLE DEPARTMENT.

The Oneida Community in their Preserving Department have the past year filled with fruits and vegetables over 500,000 cans, 25,920 quart bottles, and 5,520 jelly tumblers.

To make and seal the cans it has taken 1,718 boxes of tin, 10,473 lbs. of pig tin, and 12,399 lbs. of pig lead, costing in the aggregate, \$11,233.40. The freight on the same from New York was \$435.00.

The bottles cost \$1,121.00, and corks for the same \$487.20.

178 barrels of granulated sugar have been used, at a cost of \$4,950.50.

The Department paid out for hired labor during the year 1878, \$14,671.81, and during September, our busiest month, there were 304 names on its pay-roll. Women and girls were paid from 40 to 70 cents for ten hours; the men from \$1.00 to \$2.00 a day, according to their skill and varied responsibilities. All over-time was paid for at regular rates.

To the neighboring farmers \$9,378.10 was paid for fruits and vegetables delivered at the canning factory.

For products and wages \$24,049.91 were paid out to the immediate neighbors of the Community through this single department.

For fruits shipped us from various parts of the State \$10,116.94 were paid; the expressage on the same being over \$550.

The goods packed have been sold principally in the Eastern, Middle and Western States.

Prices have ruled quite low the past year, and although the amount of goods packed was considerably greater than in 1877, the receipts from sales are only about \$4,000 more than in the year previous.

H. G. ALLEN, Gen. Sup't.

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Oneida, N. Y.

Advertisements.

Business Directory OF THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY.

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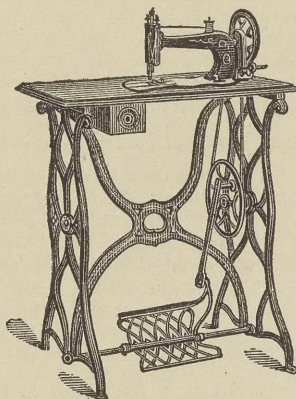
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This work gives the fullest account of the Oneida Community of any single publication, and it also enables the reader to compare the principles, customs and regulations of the O. C. with those of other Communistic Societies. It was written after personal observation of the described Communities, and is commended as an impartial and trustworthy record.

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